AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A shredded tobacco supply apparatus of a cigarette manufacturing machine, said supply apparatus comprising a plurality of tobacco [[feeder]] feeders, at least one of said tobacco [[feeder]] feeders including

a reservoir stored with shredded tobacco,

an ascending conveyor capable of receiving the shredded tobacco from said reservoir and transferring the shredded tobacco upward,

a deposition chute capable of receiving the shredded tobacco from said ascending conveyor and depositing the received shredded tobacco, said deposition chute including an inlet adjoining an upper end of said ascending conveyor and a pendent passage extending downwardly from the inlet straight to a lower end thereof,

a feed roller unit for delivering the shredded tobacco from the lower end of said deposition chute at a constant supply rate,

acceleration means for accelerating the shredded tobacco delivered from said feed roller unit without using pneumatic pressure, and

pneumatic transportation means for transporting the shredded tobacco accelerated by said acceleration means, along with an air

current, toward a tobacco band of said cigarette manufacturing machine,

said pneumatic transportation means including a chimney for guiding the shredded tobacco and the air current toward the tobacco band, each of the tobacco feeders having a chimney, the [[chimney inclining]] chimneys being adjacent to one another and being inclined at an angle to the traveling direction of the tobacco band, each of the chimneys supplying a same type of tobacco.

2. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, which further comprises a bottom conveyor forming a bottom wall of said reservoir and capable of transferring the shredded tobacco from said reservoir toward said ascending conveyor.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said pneumatic transportation means includes a jet diffuser for jetting out an air current toward the chimney, the jet diffuser being capable of jetting out the air current at an angle of inclination equal to the angle of inclination of the chimney.

5. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said acceleration means includes an acceleration roller located for

rotation between said feed roller unit and the jet diffuser, the acceleration roller being capable of mechanically accelerating the shredded tobacco by rotating.

6. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said pneumatic transportation means circulates the air current.

7. (New) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising at least one blower in a housing of at least one of the tobacco feeders for establishing the air current which flows along an air current circulation path, the blower recycles air along the air current circulation path to thereby minimize contact of fresh air with the tobacco.

8. (New) The apparatus according to claim 7, wherein a plurality of blowers are used to establish the air current.